

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-20 NSC-10 SY-10

USSS-00 DOTE-00 IO-14 NEA-11 TRSE-00 AID-20 L-03

SPC-03 DRC-01 /149 W

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R 021155Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3061

S E C R E T ROME 1541

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: IT, ETRN, PINS

SUBJECT: AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: (A) ROME 332; (B) STATE 11147

1. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED AIRPORT SECURITY MATTERS WITH INTERIOR MINISTER TAVIANI FEBRUARY 1. THE AMBASSADOR TOLD TAVIANI WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEND AN FAA TEAM OF AIRPORT SECURITY EXPERTS TO ITALY ON A REIMBURSABLE BASIS TO HELP WORK OUT A PLAN FOR ANTI-TERRORIST MEASURES AT ITALIAN AIRPORTS AND TO DISCUSS FURTHER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE US AND ITALY IN THIS FIELD. MINISTER TAVIANI SAID HE WOULD FAVOR THE VISIT OF SUCH A DELEGATION AND SUGGESTED THAT THE INVITATION BE EXTENDED BY THE CHIEF OF CRIMINALPOL (ITALIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY, CRIMINAL DIVISION) FOR A SEVERAL DAY VISIT. TAVIANI SAID OUR DELEGATION OF FOUR OR FIVE EXPERTS WOULD BE THE GUESTS OF CRIMINALPOL DURING THEIR VISIT.

2. TAVIANI GAVE THE AMBASSADOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THE DECEMBER 17 ARAB TERRORIST ATTACK AT FIUMICINO AIRPORT IN ROME. HE SAID THAT IT WAS THE WORK OF AN ANTI-ARAFAT PALESTINIAN GROUP, PERHAPS HABASH'S PLO ORGANIZATION. HE SAID THAT THE ATTACK AGAINST THE PAN AM AIRPORT SUCCEEDED BECAUSE THE EIGHT ANTI-

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SABOTAGE SQUAD AGENTS AT THE AIRPORT WERE ALL ON THE OTHER SIDE

OF THE TERMINAL GUARDING AN EL AL PLANE AND AN ALITALIA FLIGHT BOUND FOR TEL AVIV. TAVIANI EMPHASIZED THAT THE INTERIOR MINISTRY HAD RECEIVED NO REPEAT NO ADVANCE WARNING OF AN ATTACK ON FIUMICINO. HE SAID HOWEVER THAT HE HAD WANTED TO BEEF UP AIRPORT SECURITY BEFORE THE ATTACK BUT HAD BEEN HAMPERED BECAUSE THE SENIOR POLICE OFFICIAL HE HAD WANTED TO ASSIGN TO THIS JOB WOULD HAVE REFUSED TO ACCEPT IT, BECAUSE IT WAS CLASSIFIED AT LOWER THAN THE OFFICIAL'S RANK. TAVIANI SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE IMPACT OF THE TRAGEDY HE HAS NOW BEEN ABLE TO TAKE APPROPRIATE SECURITY MEASURES AND THAT A SENIOR POLICE OFFICIAL, QUESTORE UGO MACERA, NOW HAS FULL JURISDICTION OVER AN ENCLAVE INCLUDING FIUMICINO AND CIAMPINO AIRPORTS. TAVIANI SAID THAT HENCEFORTH POLICE CONTROLLING PASSENGER HAND LUGGAGE WOULD BE BACKED UP BY A SECURITY AGENT ARMED WITH A MACHINE PISTOL AND THAT "MOBILE TOWERS" WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR AIRPORT SHARPSHOOTERS. HE SAID THAT THESE MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN AT THE TWO ROME AIRPORTS AND MILAN'S LINATE FIELD. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED TO IMPROVE SECURITY MEASURES AT OTHER CIVIL AIRPORTS IN ITALY BUT THAT FOR CERTAIN AIRPORTS, LIKE NAPLES AND FLORENCE, THE DEFENSE MINISTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RUNWAY SECURITY. INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES AT THESE FIELDS WILL DEPEND ON ACTION BY DEFENSE MINISTER TANASSI.

3. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED SATISFACTION TO TAVIANI THAT ITALIAN AIRPORT SECURITY IS BEING TIGHTENED. THE EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW-UP ON TAVIANI'S FAVORABLE REACTION TO THE IDEA OF A VISIT BY A TEAM OF U.S. AIRPORT SECURITY EXPERTS AND WILL, AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH APPROPRIATE GOI OFFICIALS, HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS ON COMPOSITION OF US TEAM. VOLPE

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